

Taking care of people makes mission happen

By Lt. Col. Mike Prusz

343rd Reconnaissance Squadron commander

OFFUTT AIR FORCE BASE, Neb. (AFPN) — I've seen many examples of good leadership helping accomplish the mission while serving as a squadron commander here. I observed this at all levels ranging from the supervisor of junior enlisted members to senior leadership. While the circumstances varied, one thing was constant: the desire to take care of people. Effective supervisors, leaders and commanders need to live by the following concepts daily:

- Stay involved with your people. Military people are motivated to perform better when they are reminded that their sacrifices are appreciated. I have seen this practiced in the form of a brief telephone call to the family of deployed members reminding them they are an important part of the team;
- Build an identity for your organization. An identity fosters improved esprit de corps. I have seen enhanced mission performance in an

Commentary

organization that held simple but effective farewell luncheons and handed out plaques. These luncheons reminded everyone of the unit's collective mission and desire to recognize people who continued to produce the unit's success;

- I also saw a unit develop an identity through family rosters. The roster listed spouses and family members and helped break the ice that led to more contact between families and other military members;
- Optimize satisfaction. True leaders recognize the diversity of today's Air Force and understand the needs and interests of this diverse group. When leaders take the time to know their people's goals and dreams, they can understand if an assignment will be seen as an opportunity or as the loss of a valuable teammate; Make it fun to be a

part of the organization. The list of activities I have seen effective leaders conduct is endless: family functions at a pumpkin patch, family events at an amusement park, river cruises, etc. Don't make it "mandatory fun," but, instead, make it an event that people want to attend; and

- Communicate, communicate, communicate. Successful leaders deliver the news, both good and bad. I have noticed the adverse impact of the leader who delivers good news and allows bad news to filter via unofficial channels versus the respect gained by the leader who, while not enjoying the moment, delivers the bad news in an open but honest atmosphere. We all know that it is the people who accomplish the mission. Take a minute this week to ask, As a supervisor, leader, or commander, am I practicing these five tools to take care of my people? (Courtesy Air Combat Command News Service)

ANG diversity plan works for everyone

By Chief Paul Wehinger

179th Chief's Council



As the Air National Guard diversifies its organization in relations to people we must realize there will be, and has been, some resistance.

Once the Air Guard diversifies its organization we must see to it minorities are being treated fairly and they get the same

opportunities as everyone else. We cannot afford to lose the minorities we already have...they are our role models, future mentors and word of mouth recruiters.

Diversity is not just how our organization looks as compared to community demographics. It is also a look inside our organization at the level of responsibility given to the members and the positions they hold. These are issues that need to be discussed starting at the top.

We must learn to accept one another. This is why the ANG's plan

for diversity training is so important. It should not dictate change but rather help people understand why changes need to be made.

It should also give all members the opportunity to express their feelings as it pertains to not only cultural changes, but personal behavior changes as well.